

Village of Washingtonville
9 Fairlawn Drive
Washingtonville, NY 10992
845-496-3321

Comprehensive Plan Committee Meeting
Meeting Location: 9 Fairlawn Drive, Washingtonville, NY
Monday January 18, 2023 at 7:00PM

Present:

Alma Gonzalez, Andrea Hyman, Bob Buchalski, Celina Rofer, Donna Jacaruso, George Lanzot, James Casazza, Jennifer Nieves, Trustee Jimmy Kolar, Joanne Wiley, Jodi Connolly, Mayor Joseph Bucco, Trustee Laurisa Sampson, Margaret Stack, Patrice Gesner, Sharen Casazza, Tom Devinko, Trustee Valerie Laudato, Verdinia Washington

Also present: John Behan- Behan Planning and Design
Amy Fitzgerald- Behan Planning and Design
Kate Schmidt- Orange County Planning Department
Megan Tennermann- Orange County Planning Department

Mayor Bucco called the meeting to order at 7:00pm and led the pledge of allegiance.

John Behan and Amy Fitzgerald, from Behan Planning and Design, were introduced to the committee and we did a round table introduction of everyone present. Mr. Behan began the meeting by giving an overview. The plan for today is to talk about the process for public outreach, discuss opportunities to take on specific roles for topics of interest, share responsibilities and review an approximate schedule for the plan.

Kate Schmidt and Megan Tennermann from Orange County Planning Department gave a brief overview on their role. Some of their responsibilities include, but are not limited to, overseeing planning throughout the county. They work on transit, land use, sustainability, energy efficiency, conservation, housing studies and demographics.

Amy Fitzgerald (Behan Planning and Design) went through the draft schedule:

- Task 1. Community Visioning/Public Outreach
 - a. Public Engagement
 - b. Planning Topic Exploration and Consensus Building
 - c. Public Meeting and Public Hearing
- Task 2. Inventory and Analysis
 - a. Vision, Goals and Objectives
 - b. Review of Community Setting
 - c. Land Use
- Task 4. Priorities and Implementation Strategy
- Task 5. Draft Comprehensive Plan Update
- Task 6. Environmental Review of Draft Plan

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Task 7. Support Plan Adoption and Prepare Final Report
(Tasks are labeled per original Discussion Draft Schedule where it appears to be accidentally misnumbered thus no Task 3.)

John Behan and Amy Fitzgerald will attend monthly Comprehensive Plan Committee meetings in addition to as needed.

John Behan continued by explain we would break into groups to gather information and share. The suggested topics are 1. Community Character, 2. Transportation and land use; mobility and infrastructure, 3. Housing, Settlement Patterns, Affordability and Changing Demographics, and 4. Storm Water management, Natural Resources Conservation and Open Space and Recreation Needs. Each group could establish subtopics if needed. The general process for the group work would be to gather information, discuss and share with the committee and establish what outcome we want for the village. The goal is to get to the “big picture” for our vision of Washingtonville so when we are done we will have a strategic set of “big picture” ideas; two examples: Environmental regarding water and community- connecting youth to seniors. Amy will help put it together, write it and help find grants.

Mayor Bucco and James Casazza gave a tour of the village to John Behan and Amy Fitzgerald today. Ahern Blvd was noted to be the widest street in the village where the original plan was to have an island in the middle of it from Washington Blvd to Toleman Road.

We have a code book from 1995 and 2003 where all numbers are different and neither book was ever adopted as there was never a public hearing for each book. The Village Board is working to fix this and establish an updated book for the Village Code.

Committee Comments:

- T. Devinko: Schedule of attorney review should be added to the process/draft schedule
- J. Wiley: The role of the attorney needs to be defined. What/When is it appropriate
 - J. Behan responded: the attorney’s role comes in at the end. We aren’t putting zoning into the comprehensive plan. We are making “big picture” ideas and recommendations for future decisions that will be made by the Village.
- B. Buchalski: Asked J. Behan for a sample comprehensive plan from a similar village for reference.
- D. Jacaruso: If the comprehensive plan is done at the end of the year then what happens if it doesn’t match with the current language in the code?
 - Mayor Bucco responded: we (the Village Board) will be working side by side with the Comprehensive Plan Committee. The Village Board is currently working on zoning code revisions.
- Megan Tennermann/Katie Schmidt: Consider the comprehensive plan like a map of New York; you know it’s New York but you don’t see all the specifics. The zoning code to the comprehensive plan is like seeing Washingtonville on the map of New York.

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- Suggestion was made to review the comprehensive plan every 5 years as well as the village code so they both always match.
- M. Tennerman: The comprehensive plan is what we want it to look like and the zoning is how we make it happen.
- J. Wiley: Which of the 4 topics for group work take precedence of importance?
 - J. Behan responded that land use will apply to every topic and community character will help guide and use.
- J. Connelly: If we determine a historical district can we take it to the Village Board to recommend rules for zoning, for example to suggest not knocking down buildings if the replacement is with a modern style building.
- Mayor Bucco: Asked a question to Katie Schmidt → Should all 3 Village Boards be meeting together or just the Village Board.
 - K. Schimdt: The Comprehensive Plan Committee will work on the comp plan and final approval will be by the Village Board
 - M. Tennermann: Village Board adopts the zoning code but encourages the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals to give their input.
- Hyman: Need to get zoning under control so future plans aren't grandfathered. She offered to help with the zoning plans/revisions.
 - V. Laudato- Will work out a plan to work together (with others who are interested) on the code
- J. Wiley: timeline for adoptable zoning while comprehensive plan progresses. Is there a way to explain timeline development.
- J. Behan: Stated he doesn't want us to undershoot the Village by prematurely adopting a new code until we hear the ideas and strategies from the comprehensive plan committee and his company.
- J. Casazza: Until we get the comp plan together we don't now how we want the zoning to be just yet.
- B. Buchalski: We have some big holes and some small holes that we don't know about but more concerned to plug up the big holes first.
- Alma: asked about the group makeup for our committee group work

Celina Rofer took names from the committee of volunteers for 1 or more of the 4 groups stated on page 2. Group members will bring ideas, questions and comments to next meeting where we will break into the groups to discuss and share. Can contribute to more than one group.

Next Comprehensive Plan Committee Meeting is scheduled for Wednesday January 28, 2023 at 7:00PM in the Village Hall.

Meeting Adjourned at 8:28pm.